

## **UNITED STATES SERVICE ACADEMY NOMINATIONS 2020 FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

### **What are the five service Academies?**

- United States Military Academy - <http://www.usma.edu/>
- United States Naval Academy - <http://www.usna.edu/>
- United States Air Force Academy - <http://www.usafa.af.mil/>
- United States Merchant Marines - <http://usmma.edu/>
- United States Coast Guard Academy - <http://www.cga.edu/>

### **How do I attend an Academy?**

Admission to an Academy is a competitive two-step process:

- Step (1) is to obtain a Congressional or Presidential nomination
- Step (2) is to receive an appointment from the Academy

### **What is a nomination?**

A nomination is made by an authorized source, under Title 10 of the US Code. Congressional nominations include selections made by 1) the **Vice President**, who nominates candidates from any part of the nation, 2) **U.S. Senators**, who nominate candidates from their entire state, and 3) **U.S. Representatives**, who nominate candidates that reside within their congressional district.

Because the nomination and appointment process is very competitive, we highly encourage you to apply for all the nominations for which you are eligible. Every candidate is eligible for up to four congressional nominations:

- **Vice President Mike Pence**
- **U.S. Senator Tom Udall**
- **U.S. Senator Martin Heinrich**
- Your local Congressional District: **U.S. Representative Debra Haaland** (1<sup>st</sup> District), **U.S. Representative Xochitl Torres Small** (2<sup>nd</sup> District), or **U.S. Representative Ben Ray Lujan, Jr.** ( 3<sup>rd</sup> District)

### **What is an appointment?**

An appointment allows you admission to an academy and is only granted by the individual academies AFTER an applicant has received a nomination (after competing with other nominees in the areas of academics, leadership potential and physical aptitude).

### **What are the basic eligibility requirements for a nomination?**

To be eligible for nomination, you must meet these requirements by July 1, 2021:

- Be at least 17-years-old, but not past your 23rd birthday
- U.S. citizen
- Unmarried, not pregnant, and without legal obligation to support children or other dependents
- Reside within the legal boundaries of the Representative for which you are applying and of the State of New Mexico *(If you are attending a service academy preparatory school, a university out of state, or have recently relocated out of the State due to your parents' service in the military, and maintain New Mexico as your state of residence, you may still apply with our office)*

### **What is a Presidential nomination?**

Presidential, or service-connected, nominations are reserved for children of career military personnel. To qualify, the parent must meet one of the following criteria:

- Be on active duty and have served continuously on active duty for at least eight years
- Be retired with pay or have been granted retired or retainer pay
- Be a reservist or National Guard member
- Have died after being retired with pay or being granted retired or retainer pay
- Have begun adoption proceedings before the child's 15th birthday

Contact the Academy in which you are interested for specific instructions.

### **Can I apply for a nomination if I am active duty in the armed services or reserves?**

Yes, active duty service members meeting the basic eligibility criteria are eligible for the four congressional nominations, in addition to a nomination through their branch of the armed services. For more details, contact your commanding officer.

### **How many candidates can Senator Udall nominate?**

Each Member of Congress typically has one vacancy per year at each Academy. Senator Udall utilizes the competitive method, and will nominate up to ten candidates for each vacancy.

### **When should I apply for a nomination?**

You can start an application the spring semester of your junior year of high school. You can also apply after you graduate from high school, as long as you meet the basic eligibility requirements.

### **What are the qualifications you look for in applicants?**

Candidates are evaluated in six areas: academics, extracurricular activities, personal motivation and character, grit, self-assurance and poise, and a commitment to military service.

**What comprises my nomination file?**

A complete file includes your online application, three letters of recommendation, official high school/collegiate transcripts, and an official copy of your SAT and/or ACT scores. Please do not submit additional documentation.

**Online Application**

- School/Community activities (*be detailed and explain responsibilities*)
- Athletic involvement
- Honors/Awards received (*in and out of school*)
- Work experience
- Academy preferences
- Essay

**Letters of Recommendation**

- Three letters

**Official Transcript**

- High School/Collegiate transcript (*include your fall 2020 class schedule*)

**Official ACT/SAT Scores**

- You are encouraged to take the test as many times as necessary, as results will be super-scored for a composite score

**Who should complete my three letters of recommendation?**

Two of your letters should come from an academic source: a high school teacher or college professor (recommend at least one letter from a math or science instructor), counselor, or principal. The third should come from a non-academic source: a/an coach, employer, clergy/church member, mentor, volunteer, adult family friend – someone who knows you (no relation).

Please refer to the Letter of Recommendation form on what I am looking for in these letters. They should be submitted electronically in PDF form, by the author, to my office via the emailed link. If you have any issues, please contact my office.

**How should I submit my SAT/ACT scores?**

Official test results should be sent directly to my office by the testing agency. The direct reporting code is 7162 (ACT) and 4642 (SAT). If you took one of the tests before the deadline and have not yet received your scores, or are planning to take the tests after the deadline, please contact my Academy Nominations staff prior to the application deadline on October 9, 2020 to let them know. Those scores will be accepted as long as they are received prior to the interview day on November 7, 2020.

**What is the deadline for completing my nomination file?**

All items must be received in my office by Friday, October 9, 2020. Because the nomination process is competitive, material received after the deadline will not be accepted and you will not be considered for nomination.

**Can I be nominated to more than one Academy?**

It is possible to be nominated to more than one Academy. On your application, you will be asked to rank in numerical order your Academy preferences. Keep in mind that the nomination process is competitive. How well you compete among the pool of candidates will determine if you are nominated to your first choice. I recommend that you apply to more than one Academy, as you may be more competitive at one Academy than another. However, only indicate your preference for Academies that you are truly interested in attending.

**Do I need a nomination to the U.S. Coast Guard Academy?**

No. The USCGA is the only service academy that does not require a congressional nomination. You can apply directly to the Academy by March 1, 2021, at [www.uscga.edu](http://www.uscga.edu).

**Should I apply for an ROTC scholarship?**

Because the nomination and appointment process is competitive, not all candidates will receive a nomination or an appointment. Consider earning a military commission via the Reserve Officer Training Corps. (ROTC). Additional information is available at:

- Air Force ROTC: <http://afrotc.com/scholarships/application/>
- Army ROTC: <http://www.goarmy.com/rotc/college-students.html>
- Naval ROTC: <http://www.navy.com/joining/education-opportunities/nrotc.html>

**How will I know if I am nominated?**

Nominations are determined by mid-December, and all candidates will be notified via letter.

**Does a nomination guarantee an appointment?**

No. A nomination is a selection made by an authorized source and allows a candidate to compete for an appointment. You must apply at the Academies in which you are interested in addition to applying for a nomination.

**When will I know if am appointed?**

The Academies will begin making appointments in early 2021. All appointment offers are generally made by May 1 of each year.

**If I do not receive a nomination or an appointment, can I apply again?**

Yes. Candidates may apply up until the age of 23 as long as they still meet the eligibility criteria.

## **How can I improve my chances of qualifying academically for a nomination and an appointment?**

Your high school preparation should include:

- Four years of mathematics courses - including geometry, algebra, and trigonometry Pre-calculus and calculus courses are also encouraged
- One year of chemistry, with lab, if possible
- One year of physics, with lab, if possible
- Four years of English - with special attention on the study and practice of effective writing. English and American literature courses are also helpful
- Two years of a foreign language
- Physical activity - involvement in sports or club teams
- Demonstrated leadership ability
- Enrollment in one or more honors or advanced placement courses
- Enrollment in one or more college/university course through “dual enrollment”

We recommend a **minimum** ACT composite score of 26 and/or SAT score of 1200 to be competitive at the academy level.

## **Why should I participate in extracurricular activities?**

Your participation in athletic and non-athletic extracurricular activities will help demonstrate your ability to meet the physical, time-management, and leadership demands of four years at an Academy. Maintaining the highest level of physical fitness in high school will benefit your application, as physical exercise is part of everyday life at an Academy. Participation in these activities, as well as a record of part-time employment, will help to show your versatility and your ability to accept responsibility.

## **2020 Dates to Remember**

**April 6** – Online Application Process Opens

**Regional Information Nights throughout April** – visit [www.tomudall.senate.gov/help/academy-nominations](http://www.tomudall.senate.gov/help/academy-nominations) for dates and location of our in-person information days

**October 9** – Online Application Process Closes

**November 7** – Interview Day in Albuquerque (*by invitation only, in coordination with Senator Heinrich’s office*)

If you have any questions or require assistance, please contact my Albuquerque Office at (505) 346-6791 or email at [nominations@tomudall.senate.gov](mailto:nominations@tomudall.senate.gov).